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Burns celebrates open house of new city building

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It was a rainy morning Saturday, but when it came time to cut the ribbon on the new city library/city hall building at Burns, the rain had gone away, at least for a while.

The new facility is a renovated century-old building on Main Street.

Prior to ribbon-cutting, Mayor Mary Glenn conducted a ceremony inside the meeting room of the new city hall.

Mark Steward, president of Burns City Council, praised those who gave donations and contributed to fund-raisers, for a total of \$91,200.

He said another \$50,000 for the project came from a bank loan and \$50,000 from a matching grant from USDA Rural Development.

Banker Steve Waite praised the people of the Burns community for accepting outsiders like himself and being open to ideas on revitalization.

"This community is able to see the possibilities," he said.

Waite noted that preserving the century-old building keeps memories alive.

"The new facility will take you into the new century," Jim Barnett, state senator from the 17th District, told the crowd.

He noted that during its 100 years, the building was used as a telephone exchange, furniture store, drug store, jewelry store, American Legion hall, and for undertaker services.

It housed the Burns U.S. Post Of-

fice until a new postal facility was built several years ago.

According to *Marion County Kansas Past and Present* by Sondra Van Meter, published in 1972, the building played a role in the first year of the first consolidated grade and high school in Kansas. When three school districts were consolidated in 1904, grades seven through nine were housed in the upper floor of the building.

Other speakers at the open house included Chuck Banks, Kansas director of USDA Rural Development, and Frank Sabitini of Topeka, who helped with the new library.

"It was a wonderful day, and we had lots of people attend," said Barb Stuhlsatz, grant writer for the project.



Mayor Mary Glenn cuts the ribbon Saturday during the open house for the Burns Library and Burns City Hall, which now are housed in a newly-renovated 100-year old building on Main Street. Glenn was surrounded by dignitaries including state Senator James Barnett, left, Chuck Banks, Kansas director of USDA Rural Development; Steve Waite, president of Community National Bank; and members of Burns City Council.